



# UL's OPERATION DECORATION HOLIDAY SAFETY CHECKLIST

Decorating your home and entertaining family and friends can help brighten the holiday season, but misusing or using damaged decorations and other electrical products may lead to dangerous situations -- including injury from shock or fire.

The safety professionals at Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) encourage you to refer to this handy checklist when decorating and entertaining in your home this holiday season.

**Does your live tree or greenery have fresh, green needles?** If the greenery isn't fresh, it can lead to a greater fire risk. When you put your live tree in the base holder, remember to keep it filled with water at all times.

**Is your tree a safe distance (at least three feet) from fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, heating vents and other sources of heat?**

**Is it blocking an exit?** These safety tips are important for both fresh and artificial trees.

**Do you use light strings that bear the UL Mark?** The familiar UL Mark on a product means that UL engineers have tested samples of the product for risk of fire, electric shock and other hazards. But you also have to remember to follow the manufacturer's instructions when using light strings and other electrical decorations.

**Before plugging in newly purchased electrical decorations, or those you've used during previous seasons, do you carefully inspect each decoration?** Cracked sockets, frayed, loose or bare wires, and loose connections may cause serious electric shock or start a fire. Replace damaged items with new decorations that bear the UL Mark.

**Do you unplug light strings and electrical decorations before replacing light bulbs or fuses?** Check the instructions to determine which maintenance the manufacturer recommends you perform. Don't attempt to make a repair unless the instructions indicate the proper procedure and equipment for doing so. Decorations may overheat or safety mechanisms may not operate properly if you don't use the replacement parts specified by the manufacturer.

**Do you keep light strings and other electrical decorations away from children's reach?** Electrical decorations aren't toys and could produce a deadly electric shock or cause a fire if misused. Make sure you keep light strings away from curious pets as well.

**Do you check for red or green UL Marks on your light strings?** The green holographic UL Mark means the light strings should be used only indoors. The red holographic UL Mark indicates the light strings can be used both inside and out -- and can withstand conditions related to outdoor use.

**Do you turn off all electrical light strings and decorations before leaving home or going to bed?** Never leave light strings and other electrical decorations operating unattended.

**Do you buy age-appropriate toys for children?** Pay close attention to the recommended age designation marked on the toy or its packaging. Always make sure the child's age matches or exceeds the manufacturer's recommended age specification.

**Do you practice kitchen safety?** Turn off and unplug all appliances when not in use. Turn pot and pan handles inward so they won't be pulled or knocked off the stove. Make sure children are supervised in the kitchen at all times.

**Have you made sure your home is equipped with working smoke alarms, carbon monoxide alarms and fire extinguishers that bear the UL Mark?** Don't forget to install, test and maintain these devices in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

**Have you developed a fire escape plan for your household?** Every member should know at least two ways out of each room. Designate a well-lit place, a safe distance from your home, where everyone can meet in the event of a fire. Remember, never return to a burning building for any reason.

If you answered "yes" to all of these questions, congratulations! If you answered "no" to any of these questions, you owe it to yourself and your loved ones to correct the hazards in your home. By putting Operation Decoration into effect in your home, you'll be on your way toward a happier and safer holiday season.

For more consumer safety information, visit <http://www.ul.com/regulators/pubedu.html>

Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) is an independent, not-for-profit testing and certification organization that has been working for a safer world by evaluating products, materials and systems for more than a century.

The National Fire Protection Association has been a worldwide leader in providing fire, electrical, and life safety to the public since 1896. The mission of the international nonprofit organization is to reduce the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life by developing and advocating scientifically based consensus codes and standards, research, training and education. NFPA headquarters is in Quincy, MA, USA.